

## **REPORT OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES**

The Wellesley Free Library Board of Trustees continued to strive for excellence in the FY '07 year with a focus on customer service to all library users as well as a clean and comfortable facility. The Library continues to operate as a cultural community center where people gather for programs on a variety of topics and attend classes on basic computer instruction. The Library also makes its resources available to organizations in the community that need meeting room space.

Trustees were saddened by the sudden death of Trustee Chair Len Seipel who was in the second year of his third term as a Library Trustee. Vice-Chair Amanda Henshon assumed the position as Chair to lead the Trustees until the end of the fiscal year.

### **Branch Libraries**

With the closing of the Branch libraries on June 30, 2006 due to a lack of funding, Library Trustees immediately heard from many devoted branch users as to what this loss meant to them. To assess the sentiment of the whole community, Trustees held a hearing on the branch closings in October 2006. With input from this hearing, Trustees developed a plan of action to raise \$250,000/branch that would allow the branches to stay open for 5 years while a permanent endowment is raised.

In response to Advisory Committee concerns that branch buildings had not been used to capacity, Trustees also explored the possibility of shared space as a way to optimize use of space and create revenue. This plan is being developed further in FY '08. Trustees also plan to rent branch space to community groups for meetings or events.

### **Development**

The current trend in libraries everywhere is to look to private funding to supplement resources. Due to shrinking budgets and harsh economic times, tax-impact resources are not adequate to meet the demands of the community. The Wellesley Free Library has been a leader in this area beginning with the Centennial Fund that raises funds for materials to enhance the basic collection provided by the tax-impact budget. Trustees have created a Director of Development position paid for by private funding to seek innovative partnerships and gifts for the purpose of providing services beyond core essentials. For the first time this year, Trustees sent an annual appeal to every household in Wellesley and were pleased with the level of support generated by the appeal. In addition to the branch campaign, Trustees are currently working on a multi-year plan to create a new foundation that will serve the needs of the library under one united entity.

### **Marketing and Communication Plan**

A small group of Trustees working with the administrative staff created a marketing and communications plan to be implemented over several years. Three focus groups were held in November 2006 and while it was found that the attendees were uniformly proud of their library and valued it highly, many patrons are still unaware of the library's many services. The plan's primary objective is to educate and inform the community as to library offerings and educate users so as to maximize their experience using the library. As various objectives are met, the plan will be updated annually.

A library e-newsletter was initiated this year. It is sent once a month to subscribers informing them of events and programs, new materials, tips for using databases and other information to help keep users informed.

### **Organizational Development Initiative**

This is the 4<sup>th</sup> year of an organizational development initiative begun when the new library opened. The purpose is to streamline workflow in departments to take advantage of design benefits of the new building and to update all job descriptions to accurately reflect work currently being done. A workflow analysis specific to the Circulation Department is complete with identification of areas that need to be improved or streamlined. The workflow analysis is continuing in other departments. Review and updating of job descriptions is almost complete.

### **Library Usage in FY '07**

Total Main Library circulation increased from 560,994 in FY '06 to 575,651 in FY '07. This number included 4,425 check-outs on a new self-check machine and 51,271 renewals by people accessing their accounts through the library's website.

The circulation statistics reported above only describe one piece of the picture in measuring library use. Other statistics of interest for FY '07 are:

- 347,176 visits to the Main Library
- 29,595 reference transactions
- 10,942 children in attendance at 324 children's programs
- 3,378 persons in attendance at general interest programs
- 331,035 visits to the library website [www.wellesleyfreelibrary.org](http://www.wellesleyfreelibrary.org)
- 9,444 patrons using laptops and wireless connection
- 18,022 Wellesley residents with library cards.

### **The Library's Collection**

In FY '07 total library holdings are as follows:

- 236,409 books
- 13,774 audio cassettes and CDs
- 11,230 video cassettes and DVDs.

The library also offered access to 2,110 audio titles in a downloadable format from the website.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Mary Ann Cluggish  
Board of Library Trustees